1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

place. The "arsenal" at Bendiyagalge is well seen in Plate XIX, figures 1 and 2, while at Pihilegodagalge all the bows and arrows were rested on an old ant heap in the centre of the cave.

Though men do sometimes dig for yams, hunting is essentially their work, and yams were usually dug by the women who also do the cooking. This is of the simplest kind; yams are roasted in ashes, in which way meat may also be cooked, while practically everything else is boiled in a pot over three stones. Many Veddas also know how to cook curry, and deer's flesh is dried on a rack and smoked. A rack is built usually in a sunny place, the meat is put on this and a smoky fire kept burning beneath it, the flesh is thus dried in the sun and smoked simultaneously. This process is usually superintended by men.

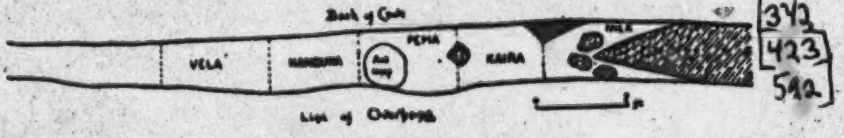

Fig. 2. Plan of Pihilegodagalge.

Plate XVII, figure 1, shows a rack built to smoke meat on the top of the Bendiyagalge rock-mass.

A Vedda will never sleep on the ground if there is any rock upon which he can lie. If he has a deerskin or a piece of cloth he will lie on it, if not he does not seem to object to the cold rock, and so avoids contact with the ground damp from the heavy dews. He always keeps a small fire burning beside him; this was noticed by Nevill, who says: "A Vaedda never sleeps without a smouldering fire by his side. I am assured, should accident oblige them to do so, they have usually died from a fever caught by the omission[1]."

The Veddas are strictly monogamous, and we were able to confirm Bailey's observations as regards their marital fidelity. "Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity,

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, Aug. 1886, p. 187.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

837 whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was very careful in my inquiries on this subject. Had it existed, the neighbouring Sinhalese would have had no hesitation in accusing them of it, but I could not obtain a trace of it[1]."

762 837 The only case of suicide of which we heard took place in connection with a breach of the common rule of conjugal fidelity. Tissahami, the husband of Kumi, younger sister of the headman of the Bandaraduwa Veddas, carried on an intrigue with his *naena*, an unmarried girl named Kirimenike. When his wife who was not one of his *naena* discovered the intrigue, she scolded her husband most unmercifully, "Why go to another woman while I live?—better to have gone to your mother than her." Although his intrigue with Kirimenike was of old standing, Tissahami was so upset with the disgrace of publicity that he killed himself in the compound outside his own hut early one morning. He had a gun, and holding the muzzle to the suprasternal notch, he pulled the trigger with his toe. The dead man's [626] relatives were very angry with Kumi for driving him to desperation but they did not threaten her, nor in any way molest her. Kumi and Kirimenike belonged to the same *waruge* (Morane) but were unrelated. Kirimenike subsequently married a Vedda, and went to live at Syringawala where she remained until she died.

562 609 In every respect the women seem to be treated as the equals of the men, they eat the same food; indeed, when we gave presents of food the men seemed usually to give the women and children their share first; the same applies to areca nut and other chewing stuffs. The women are jealously guarded by the men, who do not allow traders or other strangers to see them, and those at Sitala Wanniya were too shy to visit our camp, though they welcomed us to their cave, and the dances performed for our benefit took place in the dense jungle so that the women might be present and partake of the food offered to the *yaku*. We had offered to clear a space by our camp where the light would have been better for photography; however, the

[1] J. Bailey, "Wild Tribes of the Veddahs of Ceylon," 1863, *Trans. Ethnol. Soc.* Vol. II, p. 291.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

836 children so they came together as they grew up. The community came to know of what had occurred, the couple were considered married, and now go about together. We were told that no resentment was felt or expressed by the girl's parents or the community, and there was no formal giving over of land or property to Kaira by his father-in-law, because, as was pointed out, the fathers of Kaira and Hudi both belonged to the same group and together moved about over the same land.

We think it may be said that among most Veddas at the present day, especially such as have come in contact with the Sinhalese, there is no violent feeling against prenuptial connection of the sort here described, but we believe that formerly public opinion was definitely and strongly against the practice, though on this point we do not attempt to dogmatise. There was no doubt as to the attitude of public opinion towards connection between people who were not allotted to each other. This was, and still is, strongly disapproved, and there is no doubt that in the old days the guilty parties risked their lives.
835 It was, however, clear that intrigues of this sort did sometimes
684 occur, and we heard of two instances of what are regarded as incestuous unions which occurred among the Kovil Vanamai Veddas some fifty or sixty years ago. In both cases the girls cohabited with their mothers' sisters' sons, and in both instances the guilty parties were promptly killed by the outraged group. The men were set upon in the jungle, their own fathers it was said taking a prominent part in the assault, while the girls were killed in the huts in which they were living[1].

582 As already mentioned the correct marriage among the Veddas, as among the Sinhalese, is for a man to marry his

[1] The matter has been well stated by Nevill who writing more than twenty years ago says: "The Vaeddas marry young, and are strict monogamists. Consequently the husband and wife are watchfully jealous, each of the other, and love-intrigues are few and far between. Nothing short of murder would content the injured party. This strict morality extends to unmarried girls, who are protected by their guardians with the keenest sense of honour" (*Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, p. 178). We do not, however, agree even partially with his statement as to the considerable liberty allowed to widows, we believe that among the wilder Veddas their morality was as strict as that of the maidens and it must be remembered that it was, and is, unusual for any but old women to remain widows for any length of time.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

They are very rude in their cookery, often burning the flesh in the fire, which they produce by rubbing together two pieces of the wood of the vellan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*, Sam.). A hole is scooped in one piece with an arrow-blade, and the other, which is pointed, is inserted into it, and twirled rapidly round between the hands till it ignites. [252] 372

They are fond of betel, when they can get it; but in lieu of the compound which goes by this name, they have the following substitutes. Instead of the betel leaf, they eat the astringent bark of the demette tree (*Gmelina Asiatica*, *L.*), or the leaves of an aromatic plant called the madurutala (*Ocimum sanctum*—or *O. canum*, *L.*) For areka nut, they chew the bark of the moratree (*Nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the oupaloo or wellan connitta tree; and calcined snail shells, or the bark of the areloo tree (*Terminalia chebula*, Retz.), supplies the place of lime or chunam, which forms so important an ingredient in a prepared quid of betel. They do not smoke, and are very temperate, drinking water only. 276 824 [237] [271]

I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The "wilder sort" have had too little communication with the Singhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessaries of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrow-heads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax and honey, elk flesh, and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Singhalese, or "the ubiquitous Moors." 177 [439]

They are very harmless, too; though, according to Knox, were much dreaded once. Even yet there are traditions that they kidnapped children, ran off with young girls, way-laid travellers, and attacked the tavalams or bullock-caravans. But now, at any rate, they are as peaceful as it is possible to be. They are proverbially truthful and honest. They are fond of their children, who early become useful to them; the boys soon are familiar with the use of the bow, while the girls, armed with a pointed stick, add to the family larder at a very tender age, by killing the iguano, and digging for wild yams. 648 181 [868]

Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was 837

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kaduru (*strychnos, nux vomica*), the diwi kaduru (*taberna montana dichotoma*, Roxb.), the kolong (*nauclea cordifolia*, Roxb.), the milla (*vitex altissima*, Linn.), the mora (*nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the kaluwera (ebony, *ebenum*, Retz), which they say would stupify them; but though the three first mentioned trees would be injurious, it is probably that the rest would be harmless. [824] [261]

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

v 237 very careful in my inquiries on the subject. Had it existed, the neighbouring Singhalese would have had no hesitation in accusing them of it, but I could not obtain a trace of it. Tennent's remarks on this subject are wholly inapplicable to the wild Veddahs of Bintenne or Nilgala, though they may apply to those Veddahs of whom he writes.*

v [582] They never marry out of their race, and, with the very smallest v 592 cause, the men are exceedingly jealous of their most unattractive wives. They are very careful to keep them apart from their companions. Their huts contain but one family each, and when they live in caves, each dwelling-place is carefully screened off. There are as many as seventeen separate huts and caves among the seventy-two Veddahs of Nilgala; hardly more than four individuals to each habitation.

v s 595 Polyandry is unknown among them. The practice is alluded to with genuine disgust. I asked a Veddah once, what the consequence would be if one of their women were to live with two husbands, and the unaffected vehemence with which he raised his axe, and said, "a blow would settle it," showed conclusively to my mind, the natural repugnance with which they regard this national custom of their Kandyan neighbours. Their abstinence from a practice, which, till 1859, was recognized by the laws of the land, is remarkable. So sensitive are they on these subjects, that I know an instance of a Veddah—and he was by no means one of the wildest—drawing his knife, and being with difficulty restrained from using it, at a remark made in jest which he considered a reflection on the honour of their women.†

s 586 It is notorious that the Kandyans have no scruples with regard to divorce. Among them, husbands desert their wives, and wives their husbands, for any or no reason. Sickness is perhaps the most common cause. The heartless desertion of a sick wife is, I think, the worst trait in the Kandyan character, and the cool and unconcerned manner in which they themselves allude to it, shows that it is as common as it is cruel.‡

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* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 444, 2nd edit.

† Tennent says, "The community is too poor to afford polygamy," but I am convinced that is not the cause of its non-existence. We find it in smaller communities than these.

‡ In a civil suit in the District Court some years ago, a witness said in reply to a question from me—"How can I tell how many wives he had? A woman is married to-day, and leaves her husband to-morrow. If the wife gets sick, the husband deserts her; if the husband, the wife deserts him." A young girl of sixteen or so once coolly confessed before me to having had five husbands, three of whom were living, and two present in court, of whom one had just attempted suicide for her sake! I met with an instance of a man who had been married fifteen times; and I have heard of a woman who had had thirteen husbands.